Reflection Paper

By Tracey Ho

I find the city of Vancouver to be very different now compared to the past. Businesses used to be smaller, often housed in small buildings with more parking spaces. Over time, things have changed. Many parking lots have been removed to make space for expensive buildings, and many malls have gone bankrupt. It's disappointing, because now it feels like no one can afford to live or shop there. The biggest issue with Vancouver seems to be the high cost of living, which puts the city in a difficult position.

In contrast, Burnaby feels more thoughtfully structured. In my view, it has more public spaces, like parks, that help build a stronger community. I realize that Vancouver still has some good spaces, but many people can't afford homes, which makes things hard. Sometimes, neighborhoods in Vancouver feel scary, especially when people experiencing homelessness are in distress or acting unpredictably. It's sad that people often feel unsafe walking around. Vancouver has changed a lot—older buildings are being replaced by new, modern ones with sleek designs. The old buildings were simpler, made of brick or cement, and looked more like blocks. Both Vancouver and Burnaby just want more housing which is why there aren't any places to go through, which reminds me of being in a luxury place feeling like the future 2050 from existence.

There have been many changes in the city. Malls, for example, have grown and shrunk over time. When I think about these changes, I realize that Vancouver also offers more dense housing for immigrants and newcomers, like high-rise apartments, which remind me of New York City. Another interesting thing is how public transit connects homes and malls, making it easier to get around even in smaller communities. In the past, smaller homes like condos or cottage-style houses were more common and convenient. But now, because of rising prices, homes are often shared spaces. One thing I disagree with is how business development seems to push out meaningful places. It makes me sad to see so many of my favorite stores and companies close or disappear over time.

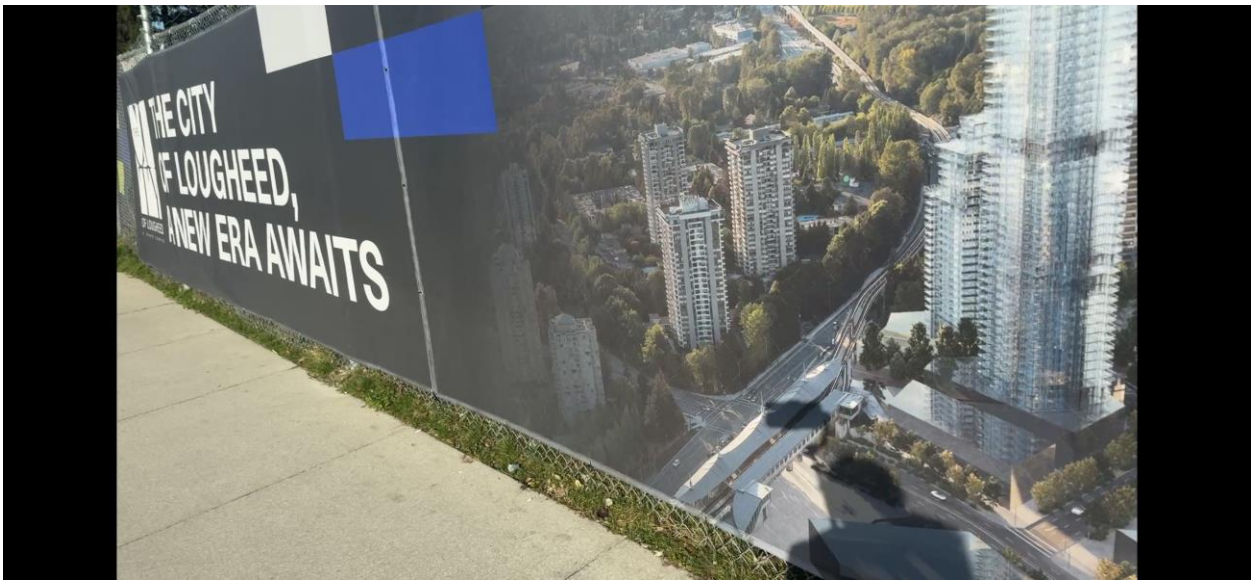
My personal reflection is that, for me, Vancouver never really feels safe. It makes me feel scared and unheard, like people can be either kind or unpredictable. In my art practice, I'm a hands-on person. I express myself through doing, not through words. When I make videos, I usually don't speak in them—I communicate without saying anything out loud. It can be hard to focus in public because distractions make it difficult to do everything at once. When I work on physical projects, I feel calm and focused. I like to create in peace, in

my own way, without worrying about what others think. I just want to work at my own pace, in my own space.

I hope that in the future, Vancouver becomes a better place—where prices aren't so high, and people can afford basic needs like shelter, food, clothing, and entertainment. Lately, many department stores have been shutting down, and that makes me sad. I miss the old times. It can be hard to think about how much has changed, especially since there isn't much funding anymore, and so many things have moved online—like grocery store gift cards, for example.

How the community looks and feels now really depends on where you are. For me, it feels very different from how I experience the city through my art. In my practice, I often focus on seeing the same places again and again—it can feel like I'm going in circles. I don't know if the city will ever truly change. From what I understand, it might stay the same for a long time, and real change takes time.

It makes me feel like Vancouver can be a ghost town – abandoned buildings completely empty where things are getting destroyed and taken away. Which reminds me of how people do this on YouTube where people film abandoned buildings and housing years ago. Reacting to it made me feel interested because I would imagine it can be true of how Vancouver's future would be when places get abandoned and end up like the United States. When I think ghost town it reminds me of a quiet place that has no people around to bother without anyone noticing. An example of this is related to Expo 86. Expo 86 was an event in Vancouver that featured many attractions, including the famous "McBarge". The McBarge was formally a McDonald's restaurant that closed in 1991 and stayed in the Fraser River for many years until sinking this year.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OF LOUGHEED,
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